

Application Serial Number: 10/757,389

Amendments to the Drawings

Applicants enclose a replacement drawing sheet for Fig. 13, in which the reference sign "80a" is replaced with ~~80b~~. As shown above, the specification is amended analogously.

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REMARKS

Claims 2-10 remain pending, and claims 1 and 11-15 are canceled. Claims 2, 5, 7, and 9 are currently amended. No claims are added.

The drawings and specification stand objected to because the reference sign "80h" is used to denote both a shift-rod gear and a torsion portion. As shown above and in the Enclosure, the drawings and specification are now amended to use reference sign ~~80h~~ for the shift-rod gear. Accordingly, withdrawal of the objections is now solicited.

Claims 1 and 5 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(a) as anticipated by *Sawyer et al.* (U.S. Patent No. 6,544,083). As shown above, claim 1 is canceled, thereby rendering its rejection moot. Regarding claim 5, applicants respectfully submit that the rejection should be withdrawn for the following reason:

The rejection relies on the shift shaft 36 shown in Fig. 5 to teach the "shift rod" recited in the claims. Regarding the "shock mitigator" recited in claim 1 and described as having a decreased diameter portion in claim 5, applicants acknowledge that Fig. 5 might suggest that the diameter of shift shaft 36 decreases near the bottom at a position just above the radially-outwardly extending projections apparently intended for mating with radially-inwardly extending projections within cam 90. However, such decreased diameter portion differs from that of applicants' invention.

Reference is made to the description of applicants' shift rod 80 on page 17, lines 24-26, of the disclosure. The decreased diameter portion extends over half the axial length of shift rod 80, so therefore torsion portion 80a is positioned so that the midpoint along the axis of shift rod 80 is located within torsion portion 80a. Claim 5 is now amended to emphasize this feature of the invention. (The claim is also rewritten in independent form.)

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Sawyer et al. does not teach this feature. The cross-sectional hatching in Fig. 5 indicates that the upper portion of shift shaft 36 is not depicted in the drawing. Thus, there can be no teaching of a torsion portion positioned so that the midpoint along the axis of a shift rod is located within the torsion portion as claimed.

Accordingly, applicants now solicit the withdrawal of the anticipation rejection of claim 5.

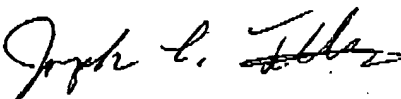
Applicants appreciate the indication in the Office Action that claims 2-4 and 6-10 would be allowable if claims 2, 6, and 9 are rewritten in independent form. As shown above, those claims are rewritten accordingly. Thus, applicants now solicit the allowance of claims 2-4 and 6-10.

In view of the remarks above, applicants now submit that the application is in condition for allowance. Accordingly, a Notice of Allowability is hereby requested. If for any reason it is believed that this application is not now in condition for allowance, the Examiner is welcome to contact applicants' undersigned attorney at the telephone number indicated below to discuss resolution of the remaining issues.

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If this paper is not timely filed, applicants petition for an extension of time. The fee for the extension, and any other fees that may be due, may be debited from Deposit Account No. 50-2866.

Respectfully submitted,
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Enclosure: Replacement drawing sheet

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